

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: UNHCR, UNDP, CY
SUBJECT: GOC POSITION PAPER ON POSSIBLE UNHCR WITHDRAWAL
FROM CYPRUS

REF: (A) NICOSIA 065, (B) STATE 019745

1. FYI FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF GOC POSITION PAPER ON UNHCR
CYPRUS OPERATION. ACCORDING TO GOC SOURCES, PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU
BRIEFED UNSYG WALDHEIM ON UNHCR ACTIVITIES AND STRESSED THE POINT
THAT UNHCR SHOULD CONTINUE AS UN COORDINATOR FOR AID TO CYPRUS.

2. BEGIN TRANSCRIPT: THE REFUGEE PROBLEM OF CYPRUS REMAINS
SERIOUS AND ACUTE. ALTHOUGH EVERY EFFORT HAS BEEN MADE TO
ALLEVIATE THE SUFFERINGS OF THE DISPLACED, THE NEEDS STILL TO
BE MET ARE IMMENSE. IN THE YEARS THAT HAVE ELAPSED SINCE THE
TURKISH INVASION, NONE OF THE REFUGEES HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO
RETURN TO THEIR HOMES, WHEREAS THEIR NUMBER HAS INCREASED DUE
TO THE NATURAL ANNUAL POPULATION GROWTH AND TO THE CONTINUED
EXPULSIONS OF THOSE WHO HAD REMAINED IN THE TURKISH OCCUPIED
AREA AFTER THE END OF HOSTILITIES.
SINCE AUGUST 1974, THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR
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REFUGEES HAS ACTED AS U.N. COORDINATOR FOR HUMANITARIAN
ASSISTANCE IN CYPRUS. THIS OPERATION HAS BEEN CONDUCTED IN AN
ADMIRABLY EFFICIENT AND SMOOTH MANNER. IT HAS PROVED EFFECTIVE
SPEEDY AND OF MAXIMUM BENEFIT TO THE DISPLACED AND NEEDY, BEING
UNIVERSALLY ACKNOWLEDGED AS ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL OPERATIONS
OF ITS KIND EVER TO BE UNDERTAKEN. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE
REPUBLIC EXPRESSES ITS DEEP APPRECIATION AND GRATITUDE FOR

THESE VALUABLE HUMANITARIAN SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE OF CYPRUS. THE CONTINUATION OF THE OPERATION IN ITS PRESENT FORM, WITH THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES AS COORDINATOR FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, IS CONSIDERED ESSENTIAL FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

(A) THE OPERATION, BEING A PURELY HUMANITARIAN ONE, REQUIRES SPECIAL PROCEDURES AND HANDLING, SO AS TO OBVIATE THE CREATION OF POLITICAL OR OTHER PROBLEMS WHICH WOULD IMPEDE OR SLOW DOWN THE HUMANITARIAN OBJECTIVES. THE U.N.H.C.R., THROUGH ITS EXPERTISE IN THIS FIELD, HAS ESTABLISHED AN EXCELLENT PROCEDURE AND APPROACH WITH ALL CONCERNED. BEING A HUMANITARIAN AGENCY, IT OPERATES THROUGH THE CYPRUS RED CROSS SOCIETY, AND THE AID IS CHANNELLED EFFECTIVELY FOR THE GREEK CYPRIOT DISPLACED AND NEEDY AND FOR THE TURKISH CYPRIOT NEEDY PERSONS.

(B) OTHER U.N. AGENCIES (SUCH AS U.N.D.P.), NOT BEING HUMANITARIAN, WOULD NOT HAVE THE SAME FACILITY OF ACTION AND COULD NOT ADOPT THE SAME SPEEDY PROCEDURES AND CHANNELS AS THE U.N.H.C.R..

(C) IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR AN AGENCY NORMALLY OPERATING UNDER ONE KIND OF REGULAR PROGRAMME AND GEARED TO PARTICULAR PROCEDURES TO ASSUME OVERNIGHT A DIFFERENT ROLE FROM ITS NORMAL ONE AND ADJUST TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH ROLE. BECAUSE OF THE BURDEN OF WORK AND BECAUSE THE ASSUMPTION BY THE SAME FUNCTIONARY OF DUAL DIVERGENT CAPACITIES IS NOT PRACTICALLY POSSIBLE, DIFFERENT DELEGATES WOULD HAVE TO BE EMPLOYED FOR THE NORMAL PROGRAM AND FOR THE HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS.

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THEREFORE, A CHANGE OF COORDINATOR WOULD NOT EVEN RESULT IN A FINANCIAL SAVINGS, BUT WOULD, ON THE CONTRARY, INVOLVE GREATER EXPENDITURE, SINCE IT IS A FACT THAT THE U.N.H.C.R. MISSION IN CYPRUS FUNCTIONS AT A MINIMAL COST, ACCOUNTING TO A FRACTION OF THE OPERATIONAL OVERHEADS REQUIRED BY OTHER AGENCIES IN DEALING WITH PROGRAMS OF SIMILAR MAGNITUDE.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT A CHANGE OF COORDINATOR WOULD RUN THE SERIOUS RISK OF DISRUPTING A SUCCESSFUL HUMANITARIAN OPERATION BY THE CREATION OF PROBLEMS WHERE NONE EXIST, THUS GRAVELY JEOPARDIZING THE HUMANITARIAN OBJECTIVE AND THE EXCELLENT REPUTATION GAINED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN THIS FIELD.

THE GOVERNMENT OF CYPRUS THEREFORE EXPRESSES THE EARNEST WISH THAT, IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL CONCERNED, A PROGRAM WHICH HAS OPERATED SO SMOOTHLY AND EFFICIENTLY SHOULD NOT BE IMPERILED BY A CHANGE OF U.N. COORDINATOR.

NICOSIA, JANUARY, 1978. (END TRANSCRIPT)

3. EMBASSY INTERESTED IN LEARNING WHAT UNSYG AND UN SECRETARIAT'S DECISION IS ON THIS MATTER.

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